

buried in their own selfish concerns rather than enjoy the good things of the feast together with fellowship with the company and with the master.

The same old story is true today. Men care more for hogs than for Jesus. They put wealth above character and prefer sensual to spiritual pleasures. Rather than give up the low standard of life they manufacture all manner of excuses with which to put off the master who stands at the door and knocks. They know not what they do, but by and by will realize when too late perhaps, that in accepting the sop from this world in the shape of sinful pleasures they have cheated themselves out of their birthright of eternal life. Some one will be at the feast. If not the many who are called then the few who are chosen will enter into its joys. The penalty of loving oxen and lands more than our Lord will be the doom of having such company rather than that in the kingdom.

#### SCRIPTURE HELP

Some Bible illustrations of foolish excuses.

- 1 A field in the way, Luke 14 : 18.
- 2 A yoke of oxen, Luke 14 : 19.
- 3 A wife, Luke 14 : 20.
- 4 Procrastination, Luke 9 : 59.
- 5 Love of the old life, Luke 9 : 61.
- 6 Love of money, Luke 18 : 22, 23.
- 7 Laziness, Luke 19 : 20-24.
- 8 Love of property more than character, Mark 5 : 13-17.
- 9 Greater anxiety for the body than for the soul, Luke 10 : 40-42.

Name other excuses often given.

- 10 The real excuse is in an unwilling heart, John 5 : 40.

How God will deal with the excuses.

Jas. 4 : 17 ; Heb. 2 : 3 ; John 9 : 24 ; Matt. 25 : 44-46.

#### TOPICS FOR TALKS

- 1 The real reason why people reject the kingdom, John 5 : 40.
- 2 How excuses are to be met and overcome.

#### QUESTIONS

- 1 What is an excuse ?
- 2 What reasons are most common today for not coming to Christ ?
- 3 Can there be any good excuse for not accepting Christ ?
- 4 Do men know that their excuses for not serving God are foolish ?
- 5 What reasons are there for being a Christian ?
- 6 How can we excuse ourselves in the judgment day if we reject salvation now ?
- 7 What more can we do to banish all excuses and serve God freely ourselves and get others to serve him ?

C. F. YODER.

#### FROM THE PRESIDENT

Our society work for the church year 1899 and 1900 is now ended. It behooves us, therefore, at the threshold of another year to take both a retrospective and prospective view—retrospective, that we may learn some lessons both from what we have accomplished as well as from what we did not accomplish but might have accomplished, and prospective, that we may determine to make the present year a mighty one for Christ and the church.

#### The Past Year's Work

We can never estimate the value or the influence of work done for Christ and in his name. Eternity alone will reveal it. Nevertheless, the fact remains, that at best we come short of our duty, not to say our privileges. On the whole, however, I think that our society has made commendable progress during the past year, despite the difficulties

under which we were compelled to labor. New societies have been organized, the Christian life has been deepened, our gifts have increased and the missionary spirit has made itself manifest. We did not quite reach the \$500 that we set at the Conference of 1899, but we have not fallen much short. For the present year no definite amount was set. We hope rather to do what we are able to do ; and it is to be hoped that every society will at once cooperate in the work planned for the closing of the present century and the opening of the new one.

#### The Conference Year

Not only was the program the most helpful—suggestive and inspiring that we have yet given, but I think that it was among the best rendered at our conference. I am sorry that more of our societies were not present. Enthusiasm is contagious. It can be communicated only by personal contact. But we have not been unmindful of those at home. The papers were written and will be published in this department. I would suggest that these papers be read by the president of each society or some one chosen for the purpose at the regular meeting of the society. Such reading cannot but be helpful to any society.

#### Election of Officers

At a special meeting of the society the old officers were reelected. I can only speak for myself, but thank the society for the confidence it has in me and I hope to do more the present year than I have yet been able to do. Nevertheless my duties in the college are heavy, and I may not always be prompt in responding to your inquiries or writing for our department. But we are workers together with God and for his glory. Let us then be mutual in our prayers and works.

Miss Etta Lichty, Waterloo, Iowa is treasurer. At our business meeting it was decided that during the present year all money raised by the societies to be used in the general work of the church be sent direct to her with order as to what purpose it should be used. Do not neglect this. We want not only to know what we shall have done at the end of the year, but we want to retain the identity of our organization.

#### Immediate Help

At our General Conference, the Board of Trustees of Ashland College reported that the College buildings needed repainting badly. And so they do. The buildings have not been painted since built, in 1878-1879. They need to be repainted, not only for beauty's sake, but that the buildings may be preserved from the ravages of time and weather. The trustees reported also that they had no funds for this work, and as the work had to be done they were in a dilemma.

In our business meeting we as a united society determined to come to the rescue. We at once called for subscriptions from societies and private individuals. We are endeavoring to raise \$300. Nearly one half has been subscribed and nearly \$50 paid. I want now each president to lay this matter

before his society at the next meeting. Let the society vote the amount for which it wishes to pay during the present year for this purpose. The society here at college, made up largely of college students and not rich ones, has pledged \$25. Are there not others able to subscribe as much ? *There are.* Will they do it ? But we do not ask so much. Most societies have pledged \$5. But pledge what you can and report to me at once.

Then, let a committee be appointed to solicit donations from the church. There are persons not working with the society that will give. Do not neglect them.

And finally should this appeal be read by any member of the Brethren church isolated from church privileges, that wishes to respond, your gift will be thankfully received. One such family has given about \$20 for this purpose. Let others respond as they feel the Lord has prospered them.

Let this work be attended to at once and report to me the amount, or send the money if convenient.

The work has already begun. The buildings will soon put on a new appearance. Certainly the Board of Trustees has confidence in us. Let us not allow their confidence to be shaken.

WM. D. FURRY.

Ashland, Ohio.

#### King's Daughters

Ladies' Home Journal.

It is easier to be good in church and in doing church-work, than it is to be good at home and do the work there. To wear the cross means, "Do the work next to you." It is much easier for our girls to dress up and go out to engage in some charitable work or church-work than it is to help their mothers to keep the house in proper order, and relieve their tired hearts, and maybe their tired feet. The work of a Daughter in our Order means home before church or any charity-work. All over this land the need is for daughters to be charitable to their mothers, and bear the burdens their mothers will have to bear unless they take the burden, and as the president of our Order I wish to emphasize this. Our daughters are to be the mothers of the future, and we must have more perfect daughters in our homes. No amount of outside work can compensate for the neglect of work which the mother must do if the daughters do not share the home burdens with her. "Unselfishness in the home," is the meaning of the cross we wear. The priceless wealth of character is made by willingness to wash the dishes and sweep the rooms, which work the mother must do if her daughters do not.

#### Not Backward

Forward.

The sun shone hot on the meadow, but overhead soft, billowy, white masses floated in the sky, and the beautiful cloud shadows chased each other across the green field. One of the children, warm and tired, exclaimed, "O mother, the sun's shining here, and it's all nice and shadowy back there !